

Paradis Europe

Stalke Out of Space Project #10

Billboard Project: Copenhagen

Olafur Eliasson, Michael Elmgreen/Henrik Olesen, Lars Bent Petersen

Collaboration BizArt/Copenhagen

Invited artist/Galleri from US and Germany Denmark

1992

Art on the Billboards

BizArt strikes in five major cities

With Copenhagen as its point of departure, a large-scale international art project was launched simultaneously in New York, Rome, Madrid, Cologne, and Copenhagen. The project comprised 120 billboards, each measuring 3.5 x 2.5 meters, presenting works by 13 painters from the five participating countries.

The artistic billboards, collectively titled Paradise Europe, were displayed until 27 July at locations across Greater Copenhagen, including S-train stations, main roads, shopping centers, and other public sites.

The initiative for Paradise Europe was taken by the Danish exhibition organizers BizArt, who collaborated with five international galleries: Andrea Rosen Gallery in New York, Galleria Paolo Vitolo in Rome, Galeria La Maquina Española in Madrid, Galerie Daniel Buchholz in Cologne, and Stalke Out Of Space in Copenhagen.

Over a ten-day period, Glyptoteket in Copenhagen, together with the participating galleries in Europe and New York, presented the project through large-scale video installations showing the 120 billboards. Information about Paradise Europe was made available to the public on site, while the original billboards were installed in Copenhagen and the surrounding region.

BizArt described the project as follows:

“Paradise Europe confronts, on several levels, a classical hierarchical consciousness with a (post)modern dissolved awareness. The project situates itself between ideal and emptiness, hierarchy and entropy, vision and reality. Paradise Europe consists of relationships with reality.”

The participating artists were Felix Gonzales-Torres, Sean Landers, and Lorna Simpson from New York; Formento-Sossella, Emilio Fantin, and Tommaso Tozzi from Rome; Guillermo Paneque and Federico Guzmán from Madrid; Alan Belcher and Lothar Hempel from Cologne; and Lars Bent Petersen, Olafur Eliasson, and Elmgreen & Olesen from Copenhagen.

BizArt described itself as a group working with projects in which media and art spaces were staged as part of an ongoing investigation into art's communicative possibilities and effects, particularly within public space.

Jens Kerte



Billboard designed by Stalke Out of Space for Paradise Europe, Project #10 (1992), featuring Lars Bent Petersen, Olafur Eliasson and Elmgreen & Olesen.

Project Description

Stalke Out Of Space was the designer and initiator of an exhibition concept in which four young Danish artists—Lars Bent Petersen, Olafur Eliasson, and Elmgreen & Olesen—formed a strong artistic constellation. The project also expressed my own way of relating to the challenges within the gallery and institutional spheres.

The four artists selected to represent STALKE OUT OF SPACE (Paradise Europe) were chosen on the basis of their individual artistic development and their shared orientation toward themes that stood out clearly within an international artistic context. The project articulated three distinct approaches to the overall theme. Lars Bent Petersen worked with politics, Olafur Eliasson with aesthetics, and Elmgreen & Olesen with the body and the individual.

The theme of centre and periphery was closely linked to the ongoing globalization of artistic language. On one hand, there was an increasing inclusion of artists from the “fringe,” as seen in exhibitions such as Transmission, Displacement, and Metropolis. On the other hand, regional cultural centres experienced growing marginalisation. Artists working outside established regional centres increasingly moved outward toward a global context rather than upward within local institutional hierarchies.

Placement

A total of 28 billboards were produced and distributed among the artists. Lars Bent Petersen contributed eight works, Olafur Eliasson eight works, and Elmgreen & Olesen ten works. In addition, Stalke Out Of Space placed two introductory billboards that functioned as entry points to the project.

All billboards were positioned peripherally in relation to a central point, with Copenhagen Central Station selected as the key location. Two signs placed there served as starting points and information boards for the project. These boards combined a typical Art Forum–style advertisement on one side with a creative map on the other. The map showed Europe in the background, Denmark in the middle ground, and Copenhagen and its surroundings in the foreground, with all 28 billboard locations marked around the Central Station area. Each location was indicated by a yellow star, creating a peripheral frame around the project and simultaneously functioning as an ironic reference to the European Community.

Both information boards featured a blue background with white and yellow text.

Joint Catalogue

Stalke Out Of Space began with a shared visual design centred on the main billboards. This was followed by a conversation between the participating artists and photographic documentation of each artist's work. The catalogue also included a concluding text by Bent Fausing from the University of Copenhagen, either as a standalone contribution or integrated into the dialogue.

The conversation addressed the three billboards, the thematic framework, and the project as a whole.



Billboard works from Paradise Europe / Stalke Out Of Space Project #10, Copenhagen, 1992, featuring Olafur Eliasson and collaborating artists.



Billboard announcing Stalke Out Of Space Project #10 with Olafur Eliasson, Michael Elmgreen/Henrik Olesen, and Lars Bent Petersen at Vesterport Station, Copenhagen, 1992.